STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : APA - Mr. [illegible]

Through : MIL - [illegible]

FROM : MIL - Mr. Wisher

DATE: May 22, 1953

SUBJECT: Alleged Implication of Mr. Samuel Zemurray in Illicit Arms Traffic

Mr. Orray Taft, Jr., Office of Munitions Control, showed to Mr. Neal and me copies of a transcript of a tape recording made by a New York arms dealer (who is also an informer to the Bureau of Customs) of his conversation with one Victor D. Gordon, in the latter's apartment at 2647 Broadway on May 6, 1953.

Gordon asked about availability and prices for 100 Springfield rifles, 50 Beizing rifles of 7 or 9 mm. caliber, 250 grenades, some light machine guns (tripod), and some homemade bazookas. According to Gordon's remarks, the arms were intended for a revolution in Guatemala. There was some inconclusive discussion of shipment of the arms from Miami to Barbados by air. Gordon said he wasn't interested in export licenses. He stated that he had run revolutions before in other places, and that despite his understanding that the State Department looked on the Guatemalan thing with favor, he couldn't say how it was going to come out. He said he knew what the State Department liked things to be done, and that, [illegible] did him once in New Orleans, the State Department [illegible].

Gordon said that "Ubico" had promised 500 men out of Honduras and 500 out of Nicaragua but that Salvador was up in the air. At one point the informer asked if Gordon were in contact with Mena (Nicaraguan representative in the UN) concerning the matter. Gordon was non-committal. At another point the informer asked if Zemurray were coming up to get the arms. Gordon replied that he didn't know who was coming.

Gordon said that he wasn't confident that Chamorro in Nicaragua would really be able to handle Somoza and said that he didn't understand how Martinez in El Salvador "has it hooked up so that Guatemala wouldn't bother Salvador".

The transcript shows an interruption in the middle for re-adjustment of the tape recorder. In the covering letter from the Bureau of Customs it is stated that the informant explained that he had the tape recorder running in plain view during the conversation, having told Gordon that it was just erasing a previous recording.

The conversation as reported is full of profanity and filthy language but in other respects reads like something out of Ring Lardner.

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According to Mr. Taft, the informer is the one responsible for the Manaroneck seizure of arms intended for Cuba. He said he would advise us immediately of any further developments.

So far as it appears from the transcript, the informer was merely fishing for information when he mentioned the name of Zemurray.

ARA:ISL:JMFisher:mem